



The “CNN Effect” and Its Influence on US Foreign Policy Decision-Making

Alida Tomja

“Aleksander Moisiu” University of Durres,
Albania

Received: 05 May 2022 / Accepted: 18 May 2023 / Published: 20 May 2023

© 2023 Alida Tomja

Doi: 10.56345/ijrdv10n1s104

Abstract

The “CNN effect” is a term that has been used to describe the influence of 24-hour news coverage on foreign policy decision-making, particularly in the context of the United States. The term was coined in the early 1990s following the Gulf War, during which CNN's live coverage of the conflict was widely credited with shaping public opinion and influencing US foreign policy decisions. Since then, the concept of the “CNN effect” has been the subject of much debate and analysis in the field of media and foreign policy. The aim of this paper is to examine the impact of the ‘CNN effect’ on US foreign policy, with a specific focus on its role in shaping public opinion and influencing policy outcomes. Through a case study of US foreign policy initiatives in Somalia, this study analyzes the relationship between media coverage and policy decisions. The methodology used in this study involves conducting an in-depth analysis of media coverage and policy decisions in the selected cases. A combination of primary and secondary sources, including news reports, government documents, and academic literature, was used to develop a comprehensive understanding of the “CNN effect” on US foreign policy decision-making. The findings of this study suggest that the “CNN effect” is a real phenomenon that has had a significant influence on US foreign policy decision-making. Media coverage can create pressure on policymakers to take action by generating a sense of urgency and demand for response among the public and other stakeholders. In addition, media coverage can shape the international community's response to a crisis or conflict, which can further influence policymakers. However, the impact of media coverage on foreign policy decisions is complex and multifaceted, as decision-makers must balance the information presented in the media with other factors, such as strategic interests and long-term goals. This paper contributes to the understanding of the relationship between media coverage and foreign policy decision-making, highlighting the importance of considering the influence of media in policy outcomes. Understanding the “CNN effect” can inform the strategies of policymakers, journalists, and the general public in shaping the discourse and decisions of US foreign policy.

Keywords: CNN effect, US foreign policy, media coverage, public opinion, policy outcomes

1. Introduction

The role of media in shaping foreign policy decision-making has been a subject of significant interest and debate. One influential concept in this realm is the “CNN effect,” which refers to the impact of 24-hour news coverage on policy decisions, particularly in the context of the United States. Coined in the early 1990s following the Gulf War, the “CNN effect” gained prominence as CNN's live coverage of the conflict was credited with shaping public opinion and influencing US foreign policy choices. Since then, the concept has been widely examined and analyzed in the field of media and foreign policy.

This paper aims to investigate the influence of the “CNN effect” on US foreign policy decision-making, with a specific focus on its role in shaping public opinion and policy outcomes. The study will utilize a case study from a significant US foreign policy initiative in Somalia to analyze the relationship between media coverage and policy

decisions. One of the *hypotheses* posited in this study is that the “CNN effect” has had a significant impact on the formation of public opinion in the United States, as well as on the actions taken by American policymakers in response to the Somali crisis.

The *objectives* of this study are threefold. First, it aims to examine the extent of the influence of the “CNN effect” on public opinion in the United States. Second, it seeks to assess the role of media coverage in shaping US foreign policy decisions during the analyzed case. Lastly, it aims to understand how media coverage influenced the international community’s response to the Somali crisis. To address these objectives, the study will explore several *research questions*. It will investigate the extent to which the “CNN effect” influenced public opinion in the United States regarding the Somali crisis. Additionally, it will delve into how media coverage shaped US foreign policy decisions during the selected case. Furthermore, the study will examine the ways in which media coverage influenced the international community’s response to the Somali crisis.

By examining the relationship between media coverage and foreign policy decision-making, this paper aims to contribute to our understanding of the dynamics involved. It emphasizes the significance of considering the influence of media in shaping policy outcomes and provides valuable insights for policymakers, journalists, and the general public in navigating the complexities of US foreign policy decision-making.

2. Literature Review

The “CNN effect” has been a topic of significant scholarly discussion and analysis in the field of media and foreign policy. Various authors have provided insights and perspectives on the influence of media coverage on US foreign policy decision-making, offering different viewpoints and interpretations. Some argue that media images of distress can sway American policymakers to intervene in foreign conflicts (George Kenan, 1993), while others emphasize that finding conclusive evidence of such impact is challenging (Livingston, 1997; Robinson, 1999). The concept of the “CNN Effect” has been widely discussed in this context, examining the potential role of news media in driving foreign policy decisions (Robinson, 2005). Ammon (2001) explores the shaping of global politics through television, particularly focusing on CNN’s role in telediplomacy and foreign policy. Brown (2002) examines the politics of perception management in the United States, highlighting the intricate relationship between media and foreign policy. Entman (2004) delves into the framing of news and its influence on public opinion and U.S. foreign policy projection.

Scholars have also scrutinized the CNN Effect and its communication theory implications in international relations (Gilboa, 2005). Herman and Chomsky (1988) shed light on the political economy of mass media, specifically addressing the notion of “Manufacturing Consent.” Livingston’s research (1997) provides a comprehensive examination of media effects based on the type of military intervention, adding nuance to the understanding of the CNN Effect. In the context of specific cases, Livingston and Eachus (1999) analyze U.S. media coverage of the Rwandan genocide. Robinson (2002) critically evaluates the myth of news, foreign policy, and intervention, contributing to the discourse surrounding the CNN Effect. Shaw (1996) explores the role of civil society and media during global crises. Additional studies have examined the impact of real-time media coverage on foreign policy decisions (Gowing, 1994) and the pervasiveness of media in shaping public opinion (Hoge, 1994; Burns, 1996; Jordan & Page, 1992). Furthermore, the role of television and the media in presidential decision-making during foreign crises has been investigated (Stech, 1994; Beschloss, 1993).

In summary, these works contribute to the understanding of the complex relationship between media, public opinion, and foreign policy decision-making. While some argue for a significant CNN Effect, others contend that the influence of media on policymakers is multifaceted and subject to various factors. It is important for further research to engage with these diverse viewpoints and conduct empirical studies to explore the mechanisms through which media coverage influences foreign policy decisions. By doing so, scholars can deepen our understanding of the complex interplay between media, public opinion, and policy outcomes in the context of US foreign policy.

3. Methodology

This study employs a comprehensive methodology to examine the relationship between media coverage and foreign policy decision-making in the selected case of Somalia. The following steps were taken to facilitate the analysis:

1. **Extensive Literature Review:** A thorough review of academic literature, news reports, government documents, and other relevant sources was conducted to gain a comprehensive understanding of the media coverage and its potential impact on policy decisions. This review helped establish the background context and identify key factors influencing the “CNN effect” in this case.

2. **Analysis of Media Coverage:** The study focused on analyzing prominent media coverage during the respective time period of the Somalia crisis. This involved studying notable news articles, televised reports, photographic imagery, documentaries, and any other media materials that were considered influential and widely proclaimed as having a significant impact on shaping public opinion and pressuring policymakers.
3. **Examination of Opinion Polls:** To assess the impact of media coverage on public opinion, the study analyzed opinion polls conducted during the relevant timeframes. These polls, mainly sourced from reputable organizations such as Pew Research Center, New York Times, CBS News, ABC News, and Washington Post, provided insights into the attitudes of the American public towards the U.S. intervention Somalia.
4. **Evaluation of Political Statements:** In order to gain insights into the decision-making process, the study examined possible statements, press conferences, and memoirs of key decision-makers, including presidents, secretaries of defense, secretaries of state, and national security advisors. These sources were scrutinized for explicit mentions or acknowledgments of the "CNN effect" or the impact of media coverage on their respective policy decisions.

By employing this multi-faceted methodology, incorporating a range of primary and secondary sources, the study aims to provide a comprehensive analysis of the "CNN effect" and its influence on U.S. foreign policy decision-making in the selected case.

4. Case Study: Somalia

4.1 Historical context

In the early 1990s, Somalia experienced a severe humanitarian crisis caused by a combination of drought, civil war, and famine (Metz, H. C., 1993). The political instability and violence that erupted after the overthrow of the country's authoritarian leader, Siad Barre, in 1991 further exacerbated the situation (Bahador, 2016). The fighting between rival clans and warlords had led to widespread violence and displacement, with many Somalis fleeing their homes in search of safety and food (Gowing, 1994; Livingston & Eachus, 1999).

The international community, including the United Nations, became increasingly concerned about the situation and launched a series of humanitarian aid efforts to provide assistance to those in need. As part of a larger UN peacekeeping endeavor, the United States intervened in Somalia in 1992. Initially, President George H.W. Bush sent troops to Somalia to secure food supplies and protect humanitarian aid workers (Robinson, 2002). However, the mission quickly evolved into a broader effort to establish security and stability in the country (Beschloss, 1993).

The involvement of the US military in Somalia was primarily driven by humanitarian concerns and the desire to protect American interests in the region. The US government also saw the intervention as an opportunity to demonstrate leadership and commitment to global security (Bahador, 2016). Additionally, there was significant public pressure on the US government to take action in response to the widely covered humanitarian crisis in Somalia (Gowing, 1994; Livingston, 1997).

The media played a crucial role in shaping public perception and generating pressure for intervention. Extensive media coverage of the famine in Somalia in 1992, including images of starving children and families, raised awareness about the severity of the humanitarian crisis and further intensified the public demand for action (Metz, H. C., 1993; Gowing, 1994). This media coverage influenced public opinion and exerted pressure on the US government to intervene.

However, the US intervention faced challenges and setbacks. The military operation in Mogadishu in 1993, known as the Battle of Mogadishu or Black Hawk Down, resulted in the deaths of 18 American soldiers and hundreds of Somalis (Robinson, 2002). This incident prompted a reassessment of the US mission and ultimately led to the withdrawal of US troops from Somalia in March 1994.

4.2 Analysis of Media Coverage

The Somalia crisis of the early 1990s received extensive media coverage, with various news outlets shedding light on the civil war, famine, and international response. The New York Times, The Guardian, ABC News, The Washington Post, CNN, and Al Jazeera played crucial roles in reporting on the crisis and influencing public opinion and government actions. Prominent journalist Jane Perlez contributed significantly to the coverage of the Somalia crisis. Her articles in The New York Times, including "Somalia Self-Destructs, And the World Looks On" (Dec. 29, 1991) and "Somalia, abandoned to Its Own Civil War with Others' Weapons" (Jan. 6, 1991), provided in-depth analysis and reports on the dire situation in

Somalia. Perlez's articles highlighted the devastating impact of the civil war, the power struggles among warlords, and the resulting famine and humanitarian crisis.

Photographs also played a crucial role in conveying the gravity of the situation. For example, Peter Turnley's photograph titled "Somali Mother with Children Waiting for Food" captured the desperation of famine victims during Somalia's civil war, further emphasizing the dire humanitarian situation (Turnley 1992, Getty Images). Norbert Schiller, through his photographs and accompanying text, documented the devastating consequences of the civil war in Somalia. His work titled "Somalia 1992: Civil War, Famine and Death of a Nation" provided a visual and textual account of the destruction and loss experienced by the Somali people (Schiller, N. 1992).

Opinion pieces published in *The New York Times* also contributed to the discourse surrounding the crisis. "Time to Change U.S. Policy in Somalia" (Jan. 3, 1991) called for a reassessment of U.S. policy towards Somalia, urging a more proactive approach to address the ongoing crisis. Another opinion article, "Save Somalia from itself" (Jan. 2, 1992) by Nancy Kassebaum and Paul Simon, emphasized the need for international intervention to prevent further suffering and instability in Somalia. Furthermore, CNN and Al Jazeera, as major international news networks, extensively covered the Somalia crisis. They provided in-depth reports that highlighted the devastating consequences of the civil war, including the widespread famine and displacement of the Somali people. Their coverage contributed significantly to shaping public opinion and fostering discussions on the urgency of international intervention to address the crisis.

The media coverage, including journalists like Jane Perlez, photographers like Peter Turnley and Norbert Schiller, and the significant role of CNN and Al Jazeera, played a crucial role in raising awareness, shaping public opinion, and generating discussions about the need for humanitarian assistance and international intervention.

Additionally, it is important to highlight the incident involving the dragging of American soldier William David Cleveland's body through the streets of Mogadishu during the Battle of Mogadishu on October 3, 1993, garnered extensive coverage from major television networks such as CNN, ABC, NBC, and CBS, as well as prominent newspapers like *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post*. This widespread media attention further intensified the pressure for a withdrawal from Somalia. The incident's portrayal received significant attention in both written and visual media outlets, amplifying the calls for a change in course. The distressing images and reports disseminated to the public shed light on the severe humanitarian crisis, leading to a marked shift in internal opinion towards the American presence in Somalia. The previously supportive sentiment for U.S. intervention transformed into a categorical and critical opposition.

President Clinton swiftly responded to the growing public sentiment by abandoning the pursuit of Mohammed Aided and issuing an order for the complete withdrawal of American troops from Somalia by March 31, 1994. This decision served as a model for other Western nations, who followed suit by withdrawing their forces. The impact of this incident extended beyond the immediate sphere of public opinion and decision-making. Osama bin Laden himself referred to it as evidence of the United States' perceived inability to cope with casualties. He pointed out that when "an American was dragged through the streets of Mogadishu, you left the area carrying disappointment, humiliation, defeat, and your dead with you." This single photograph alone had an unparalleled influence on the political trajectory of a nation.

In summary, the extensive media coverage of the incident, coupled with its portrayal in both written and visual media, played a pivotal role in heightening public pressure to withdraw troops from Somalia. The images and reports served as catalysts for a fundamental shift in internal opinion, prompting President Clinton's decision to withdraw American forces and setting a precedent for other Western nations. Furthermore, the incident's mention by Osama bin Laden underscored its enduring significance as a symbol of perceived American weakness.

4.3 Examination of Opinion Polls

The examination of public opinion polls provides valuable insights into the dynamics of public sentiment and its influence on decision-making processes. This section focuses on analyzing opinion polls conducted during the crisis in Somalia, shedding light on the shifting perceptions of the American public towards U.S. intervention in the country. By considering the media's role in shaping public opinion, we can explore how the changing narrative influenced the American public's stance and, consequently, the actions taken by the U.S. government.

Initial Support for U.S. Intervention: In December 1992, a Pew Research Center poll revealed that 62% of Americans were in favor of using U.S. military forces in Somalia to provide humanitarian aid (Pew Research Center, December 1992). This finding was further corroborated by a survey conducted by the *New York Times*/CBS News in January 1993, which indicated that 72% of Americans supported American intervention in Somalia, while only 13% opposed it (*New York Times*/CBS News, January 1993).

Media Influence on Public Opinion: The media played a crucial role in influencing the American public's perception

and, subsequently, the decisions the U.S. government had to undertake. Following the U.S. intervention in Somalia in 1992, the media extensively covered the humanitarian crisis, contributing to increased awareness among Americans (Klarevas, 2000). The significant rise in public attention is evident, as in the fall of 1992, only 30% of Americans closely followed the Somalia issue, but by January 1993, this number had surged to 90% (ibid). Such media coverage created public pressure for U.S. intervention.

Mogadishu Incident and Shifting Public Opinion: In October 1993, the incident in Mogadishu, where an American soldier's body was dragged through the streets, marked a turning point in public opinion. A survey conducted by ABC News and The Washington Post in October 1993 found that 67% of Americans favored the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Somalia, while only 30% supported their continued presence (ABC News/The Washington Post, October 1993). Similarly, a New York Times/CBS News poll in November 1993 revealed that 64% of Americans believed that the United States should withdraw its troops from Somalia, while 33% believed they should remain (New York Times/CBS News, November 1993). These surveys suggest that there was significant public pressure for the withdrawal from Somalia following the "Black Hawk Down" incident.

Media Perception and Erosion of Public Support: The media's portrayal of the Mogadishu incident and subsequent events significantly impacted public opinion. By the end of September 1993, approval of the U.S. presence in Somalia had declined from 81% in January to 49% (Burk, 1999). Only 36% of the public believed that the U.S. had the operation "under control," while 52% believed that the U.S. was too deeply involved (Burk, 1999). These shifts in public opinion were driven by concerns over the effective delivery of aid, with 69% of Americans believing it should be the primary focus (Burk, 1999).

The analysis of opinion polls related to the Somalia crisis highlights the significant impact of media coverage on public opinion and subsequent policy decisions. Initially, there was substantial support for U.S. intervention, driven by media reports highlighting the humanitarian crisis. However, the Mogadishu incident and negative media coverage led to a decline in public support for U.S. involvement and increased calls for troop withdrawal. These findings underscore the influence of media narratives in shaping public sentiment and influencing governmental actions.

4.4 Evaluation of Political Statements

Political statements play a crucial role in shaping public perception and influencing decision-making processes. In the case of Somalia, while U.S. government officials did not explicitly mention the media's influence as the sole factor in their decision to intervene, they acknowledged the role media coverage played in shaping public opinion and shaping their perspectives on the conflict. There is evidence that the Bush administration was aware of the media's impact on public opinion regarding Somalia and the decision to intervene.

Former Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney acknowledged the influence of media coverage in the decision-making process, stating that "television coverage of Somalia had created a powerful popular emotion that was difficult to resist" (Cheney, 2011) in his memoirs. Similarly, former National Security Advisor Brent Scowcroft stated that images of starving children in Somalia played a significant role in shaping public opinion and creating pressure for U.S. intervention (Scowcroft, 2014).

However, it is important to emphasize that the decision to intervene in Somalia was also motivated by strategic and humanitarian considerations, as well as domestic political considerations. The media coverage of the crisis in Somalia may have influenced the timing and nature of the U.S. intervention, but it was not the sole factor in American politics.

Furthermore, President George H. W. Bush made a statement regarding U.S. intervention in Somalia. In a televised address on December 4, 1992, he announced the deployment of U.S. troops to Somalia to assist in providing humanitarian aid and securing relief shipments. In his speech, he described the situation in Somalia as a "massive humanitarian crisis" and emphasized the importance of providing assistance to the Somali people. He also highlighted that the U.S. intervention was part of a broader international initiative and that the U.S. would closely cooperate with the United Nations and other countries to address the crisis.

Additionally, U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. Madeline Albright stated in 1993 that "television's ability to bring graphic images of pain and outrage into our living rooms has heightened the pressure both for immediate engagement in areas of international crisis and immediate disengagement when events do not go according to plan" (Albright, 1993). This statement emphasizes the impact of television media on public perception and the influence it can have on decisions regarding international crises.

Overall, political statements regarding the intervention in Somalia were influenced by media coverage, public opinion, strategic considerations, humanitarian concerns, and domestic political factors. The media's role in shaping

public perception and influencing political decisions is evident in the case of Somalia.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The preceding analysis sheds light on the role of media coverage in the U.S. intervention in Somalia. This section engages in a comprehensive discussion of the findings, critically examines the implications of media influence on political decision-making, and offers recommendations for future considerations. By synthesizing the information presented and considering the broader context, we can gain a deeper understanding of the complex relationship between media, public opinion, and political actions.

In contrast to the Cold War era, where foreign policy was a covert field where decisions were made out of public view, the U.S. intervention in Somalia was characterized by intense media coverage. The role of media in shaping public perception and influencing political decisions cannot be overlooked. The classification of crises as humanitarian disasters, accompanied by the dissemination of news and images depicting the suffering and devastation of the affected population, creates a compelling sense of urgency and demands immediate political action. In response to this media-driven pressure, politicians have demonstrated a propensity to adapt to the demands and dynamics of the media, effectively integrating media logic into their political discourse.

The decision to withdraw troops from Somalia could not have been solely attributed to excessive media coverage in Mogadishu and the iconic photo of the dead U.S. soldier being dragged through the streets. However, it is important to highlight that the significant troop fatalities and the impact of graphic photos did have a noticeable effect on policy decisions. The saturation of media with these images did negatively influence public opinion regarding the deployment and created congressional pressure. The surveys conducted by ABC News and The Washington Post, as well as the New York Times/CBS News poll, showed a significant percentage of Americans favoring the withdrawal of U.S. troops from Somalia. These findings suggest a substantial public pressure for withdrawal, which may have been influenced by the media coverage.

Nevertheless, it is crucial to exercise caution when attempting to establish a direct cause-and-effect relationship between media coverage and policy decisions. The concern raised about the CNN effect in a larger context is that theoretical models often oversimplify complex issues and assume clear cause-and-effect relationships. Influence in decision-making processes cannot be quantitatively valued. The decision-makers acknowledged the role of media coverage in shaping public opinion and the formation of their own perspectives on the conflict. However, it is important to recognize that media coverage was not the sole factor driving U.S. policy in Somalia. The decision to intervene was also influenced by strategic interests, humanitarian considerations, political messages, personal beliefs of decision-makers, and national perceptions of the situation on the ground. The CNN effect, while playing a role in shaping public opinion and the nature of intervention, should be viewed as only one piece of the puzzle among many other influential factors.

In conclusion, the media coverage of the crisis in Somalia did have an impact on the timing and nature of the U.S. intervention. The intense media coverage, influenced public opinion, creating pressure for swift political decisions. However, it is essential to avoid oversimplification and recognize that the decision-making process is complex, involving a multitude of overlapping factors. The CNN effect should be seen as a significant but not exclusive influence on policy decisions. Policymakers and media organizations should consider these findings to ensure a more comprehensive and balanced approach to understanding the interplay between media, public opinion, and foreign policy.

References

- Albright, M. (1993). "Building a consensus on international peace-keeping" – US Department of State Dispatch 4.46: 789
- Ammon, R. (2001). *Global television and the shaping of world politics: CNN, Telediplomacy, and foreign policy*. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company.
- Bahador, B. (2016). *The CNN Effect in Action: How the News Media Pushed the West toward War in Kosovo*. Palgrave MacMillan.
- Beschloss, M. R. (1993). *Presidents, Television, and Foreign Crises*. Washington, D.C.: The Annenberg Washington Program.
- Bin Laden, O. (1996) "Declaration of War against the Americans Occupying the Land of the Two Holy Places," Hindukush Mountains, Khurasan, Afghanistan, August 23. Translation to English from Arabic by the Committee for the Defense of Legitimate Rights, originally published in Al-Quds Al-Arabi newspaper (London). Retrieved from <http://www.comw.org/pda/fulltext/960823binladen.html>.
- Brommesson, D., & Ekengren, A.-M. (2017). *The Mediatization of Foreign Policy, Political Decision-Making and Humanitarian Intervention* (The Palgrave Macmillan Series in International Political Communication) (1st ed.). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Brown, R. (2002). "The US and the politics of perception management". *Journal of Information Warfare*, 1, 40–50.
- Burk, J. (1999). "Public Support for Peacekeeping in Lebanon and Somalia," *Political Science Quarterly* Vol. 114, No. 1: 68.

- Burns, N. (1996). "Talking to the World About American Foreign Policy". The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics, Fall 1996, 1(4), 10-14.
- Entman, R. M. (2004). *Projections of power: Framing news, public opinion and U.S. foreign policy*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Gilboa, E. (2005). "The CNN effect: The search for a communication theory of international relations". *Political Communication*, 22, 27–44. Web of Science
- Gowing, N. (1994). "Real-time coverage of armed conflicts and diplomatic crises: Does it pressure or distort foreign policy decisions?" (Harvard working paper). Cambridge, MA: The Joan Shorenstein Barone Center on the Press, Politics, and Public Policy at Harvard University.
- Gowing, N. (2011). "Time to Move On: New Media Realities-New Vulnerabilities of Power". *Media War & Conflict* 4(1): 13–19.
- Gowing, Nik. (2011). "Time to Move On: New Media Realities-New Vulnerabilities of Power". *Media War & Conflict* 4(1): 13-19.
- Herman, E., & Chomsky, N. (1988). *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. New York: Pantheon.
- Hoge, J. F., Jr. (1994). "Media Pervasiveness". *Foreign Affairs*, Summer 1994.
- Jordan, D. L., & Page, B. I. (1992). *Shaping Foreign Policy Opinion: The Role of Television*.
- Kassebaum, N. Paul S. (1992, Jan. 2). "Save Somalia from Itself." Opinion. *The New York Times Archives*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/1992/01/02/opinion/save-somalia-from-itself.html>
- Klarevas, L. (2000). "The United States Peace Operation in Somalia," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 64, no. 4: 524.
- Livingston, S. (1997). "Clarifying the CNN effect: An examination of media effects according to type of military intervention" (Research Paper R-18). The Joan Shorenstein Barone Center on the Press, Politics, and Public Policy at Harvard University, Cambridge, MA.
- Livingston, S., & Eachus, T. (1999). "US coverage of Rwanda. In H. Adelman & A. Suhrke (Eds.), *The path of a genocide*" (pp. 122–156). Uppsala: Nordic Institute of Africa Studies.
- Metz, H. C., Library Of Congress. Federal Research Division & Thomas Leiper Kane Collection. (1993) *Somalia: A Country Study*. Washington, D.C.: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress: For sale by the Supt. of Docs., U.S. G.P.O. Retrieved from the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/93016246/>.
- New York Times/CBS News, (1993). "Survey on American Support for Intervention in Somalia," January.
- Opinion. (1991, Jan. 3). "Time to Change U.S. Policy in Somalia." *The New York Times Archives*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/01/03/opinion/l-time-to-change-us-policy-in-somalia-949991.html>
- Perlez, J. (1991, Dec. 29). "Somalia Self-Destructs, And the World Looks On." *The New York Times Archives*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/12/29/weekinreview/the-world-somalia-self-destructs-and-the-world-looks-on.html>
- Perlez, J. (1991, Jan. 6). "Somalia. Abandoned to Its Own Civil War with Others' Weapons." *The New York Times Archives*. Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/01/06/weekinreview/the-world-somalia-abandoned-to-its-own-civil-war-with-others-weapons.html>
- Pew Research Center, (1992). "Public Opinion on U.S. Military Intervention in Somalia," December.
- Reuters. (1991, Jan. 30). "In Somalia, graves and devastation.". Retrieved from <https://www.nytimes.com/1991/01/30/world/in-somalia-graves-and-devastation.html>
- Robinson, P. (1999). "The CNN Effect: Can the News Media Drive Foreign Policy". *Review of International Studies*, 25(2), 301-309. Cambridge University Press.
- Robinson, P. (2002). *The CNN effect: The myth of news, foreign policy and intervention*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Robinson, P. (2005). "The CNN Effect: The Myth of News, Foreign Policy and Intervention (1st ed.)". *Taylor and Francis*. Retrieved from <https://www.perlego.com/book/1604613/the-cnn-effect-the-myth-of-news-foreign-policy-and-intervention-pdf>
- Robinson, P. (2011). "The CNN Effect Reconsidered: Mapping a Research Agenda for the Future". *Media War & Conflict* 4(1): 3–11.
- Schiller, N. (Photographer). (1992). "Somalia 1992: Civil War, Famine and Death of a Nation." *The World*. Retrieved from <https://negativecolors.com/exhibitions/somalia-1992-civil-war-famine-and-death-of-a-nation/>
- Shaw, M. (1996). *Civil society and media in global crises*. London: St Martin's Press.
- Stech, F. J. (1994). "Winning CNN Wars. Parameters", Autumn 1994, 38.
- Turnley, P. (Photographer). (1992, August 01). Victims of famine gather for food during Somalia's civil war. Corbis Historical. Getty Images. Retrieved from <https://www.gettyimages.com/detail/news-photo/victims-of-famine-gather-for-food-during-somalias-civil-war-news-photo/635958617>
- Watson, P.(Photographer). (1994). "U.S Soldier dragged through Mogadishu" (Photograph). Retrieved from <https://iconicphotos.wordpress.com/tag/paul-watson/>